THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Sir, the Central Government maintains export data for the country as a whole and not State-wise. The details of country's export of limestone during the past five years are as follows:

(value in Rs. Crores)

1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03 (April-Feb.)
7.70	24.35	10.06	11.90	11.37

[Source: DGCI&S]

(c) The Department of Commerce provides Market Development Assistance (MDA) for all products including limestone for participation in overseas trade fairs/exhibition and overseas publicity.

Restriction on Import of Dolomite as building Stone

3. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that restrictions on import of dolomite as building stone have been removed by Gazette Notification dated June 27, 2001 issued by Director General of foreign trade;

(b) if so, whether prescribed use of dolomite was for the chemical industry and steel plants but now it has been passed as building material which as clearly been established that it would be used as marble; and

(c) if so, whether Government intends to reconsider the decision taken by Director General of Foreign Trade for allowing import of dolomite when Rajasthan could Fulfill domestic requirement of dolomite as building material?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) India has been following a consistent policy for gradual removal of restrictions

on imports since 1991. Import restrictions on items including those on dolomite stone as notified to WTO for balance of payment reasons have been completely phased out. Reimposing of restrictions on import will not be consistent with India's international commitments and contrary to the on-going process of economic liberalisation.

However, to provide protection to the domestic producers the Government can, if the situation so warrants, utilize the mechanism of raising the applied tariffs within the bound rates, if such a gap exists and take measures such as Anti-Dumping Action, and Safeguard actions which are permissible under the WTO Agreements.

Review of Indo-Lankan free trade agreement

4. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Sri Lanka have decided to review the free trade agreement between the two countries signed three years ago;

(b) if so, the purpose of reviewing this agreement;

(c) whether it has been reported that India and Sri Lanka FTA could be a model for similar agreements with not only countries in the region but also elsewhere; and

(d) if so, to what extent this review would help to increase the quantity of imports allowed by both the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Article XI of the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement prescribes for reviewing the progress made in the implementation of the Agreement to ensure that benefits of trade expansion emanating from this Agreement accrue to both parties equitably. The Agreement prescribes for establishing a Joint Committee at a Ministerial level. The Committee can also set up sub-committtees and/or working groups as considered necessary.